The Watchman and Southron RELIBION: MURAES AND PHILOSOPHY.

Rev. C. C. BROWN, Editor. A-WINTER SONG.

O summer has the roses. And the laughing, light south wind, And the merry meadows lined With dewy, dancing posies; But winter has the sprites

And the witching frosty nights. O summer has the splendor Of the cornfields wide and deep, Where the scarlet poppies sleep And wary shadows wander; But winter field are rare With diamonds every where.

O, summer has the wild bees, And the ringing, singing note. In the robin's tuneful throat, And the leaf-talk in the trees; Out winter has the chime -Openinger has the luster Of the sunbeams warm and bright, And rains that fall at night Where reeds and lilies cluster : But deep in winter's snow

Florida Islands.

The fires of Christmas glow.

In the January number of Harper's Magazine are some notes of Southern travel by Barnet Phillips, which we

In the St. Lawrence there are the Thousand Islands. Whether they fail by one or two that complete roundness of ten times one hundred I do not know. On the southern end of the Gulf State there may be seen on the map a stretch called the Ten Thousand Islands. He was a very unimaginative person, niggardly, having a dread of exaggeration, who named these wonderful islands. He skimped his nomenclature. There are not ten thousand islands; there must be a million of them, and more to spare, almost all of them covered with mangroves. To describe them were a difficult task. I may succeed, perhaps, in giving a faint idea of their number by asking the reader to think of one of those old mosaic floors the Romans delighted in. The infinite countless little bits of stone are the islands, the cement the water. Island after island appears emerging out of these blue bays. Some are but a few acres in size; then there are others with an area of several square miles. Now the channel between them is so narrow that a boat cannot pass, and then it expands to a mile wide. Beautiful silent harbors are entered, with peninsulas jutting into them, and behind comes labyrinth. It is an end-

turies ago this island might have been

on the sea front, and some storm

then out in every direction, these in-

cross before the mainland would be

reached—that is, if you had the

wings of a man-of-war bird, and could

fly. In a boat, working in and out

row maybe one hundred miles; then

finally you might fetch up on Florida proper. This would be that hazy country which little boys read about on their maps, spelling it out, "The-Everglades," the "Ever" describing capitally the constant appearance of a great deal of water, occasional hummocks, the true home of the alligator, a God forsaken region, where the sawgrass impedes progress. We made a trip to Pine Island, which lies wedge-like parallel with the outer key. Here we found the cocoa-nut and lemon trees, the branches laden down with magnificent fruit. Here we came across certain diminutive Robinson Crusoes which excited our sympathies. On this island, with a sad-looking and dilapidated father, lived four children. You approached the place through shallows barely navigable with a light draught boat at high tide. A ram-shackle structure on rotten piles was the landing. This settlement was twenty miles from anywhere. The house, the size of a small stable, looked as if built years before, and was open to all the winds of heaven. As the winds, however, are never cold here, that perhaps was not important, but from April, as the very flood-gates of heaven are open, that family must have been drowned out for months Some time before, so we learned, while the father was absent, the mother died, and these poor bairns with their own hands dug a grave and buried their mother. How that family managed to eke out an existence God only knows. Shells of the gopher, the land tortoise, were strewn around, suggestive of miserable food. Fish, though, might have been plenty. Two grim dogs, lean

and lank, slunk around the house.

The master of these surroundings told

us the dogs were only in good condi-

tion when alligators were plentiful.

The house contained scarcely any-

thing. There was a grimy table, and

a few boxes serving as chairs. We

saw not a cup or saucer; there were

no beds. A tame crane, that did not

seem to heed our presence, flopped

around. That bird was a convincing

proof that those little girls had bestowed their love on something, and this was their pet. Fancy a lad of twelve having for a toy a squirming alligator some three feet long! Not a very lovable companion, nor one to be on intimate terms with. But it was the only thing the boy could find. Evidently it was something not to be fooled with, for the 'gator's jaws were bound with a bit of rag. At our rebound with a bit of rag. At our rebound with a bit of rag. At our rebound with a bit of rag. At our respondence was loosed, when this ugly brute at once made for the boot of one of the party and fastened his teeth in it, and would not let go Old Pictures Copied and Enlarged. until his mouth was forced open. The children could read a little, and, strange to say, the "Vicar of Wakefield" had been their horn-book. It was the only bound volume the father possessed. There were, though, as additions to the library, a few tattered numbers of children's magazines of years long gone past. There was a slate, and at once the artistic young fellow stacked his gun, dropped his Abruzzi manner, and drew for the children pretty and funny pictures, until that poor, miserable house echoed

played with the ugly fangs of the gator, and was himself the slayer of saurians. To judge from a miserable fire-arm we saw, belonging to the father, I should think the risk the boy ran was greater than that of the alligator. Then the misanthropist of the party, who often wondered why people ever wrote books or magizine stories, and was always amazed why people read them, made up his mind that that library on Pine Island should be increased, and if the mail facilities have not quite gone wrong, it is supposable that before this these children have a supply of juvenile literature sufficient to last them for some time

A Happy New Year.

That 1885 should prove to be the most blessed twelvemonth yet experienced by us is God's wish, as well as that of our friends, for happiness is the chief jewel in the coronet with which he wishes to crown us.

But his wish may mean sorrow as well as joy, since "Before honor cometh humility, and it is they that mourn that shall be comforted." It is out of the tears of the sky that rainbows are woven.

Sore afflictions often stand, like

gates, between us and gladness. The best soils are composed of rocks which, by heat and frost and glacier and earthquake, have been ground to dust. Upon such fields are reaped the graudest grain crops grown on the whole cereal belt, and upon them stand the thickest grasses and tallest forests found in any zone. It may be that tribulation alone can pulverize our stubborn wills and worldly hearts and vain intellects into such soil as shall be able to produce the choicest

fruits of the Spirit. Perhaps, in order that this may be our happiest year, it must also be our saddest. As iron which is to be wronght into the finest cutlery lies first in the fire and on the anvil, so possibly, ere you or I can be shaped into a "vessel unto honor," we must first pass through the furnace, and have showered upon us, thick and hard, the blows of God's providential

Crucifixion precedes coronation, and if we shall experience this year what may seem to us God's cruelest judgments, it should comfort us to reflect that, quite likely, they are only preparing us to appreciate and receive some of His best gifts.

God earnestly wishes us all "a happy new year," and yet He will permit many of us to be overtaken by with care and dispatch. seem brightest when looked at from provided he could only live, and re- afar. It is said that our earth, when would be impossible. Only here and chinas the standpoints, there on some of the islands is there Thus may it be with this New Year the appearance of land, perceptible upon which we are entering. Its by a thin ridge. You can tell it by most painful experiences shall work the hard wood growing on it. Cenout for us "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." It will present a very different appearance threw up the sea bottom. Stretching when gazed upon from the pinnacle of the centuries than it will while tricate islands block the way. There passing. We are not to be done may be eight, ten, or twenty miles to with 1885 when it ends. We shall never be done with it. It and all our past years will affect us forever. As a burned child often brings its babyhood scars up into old age, and wears through this maze, you would have to them beneath the whitening locks and deepening furrows of his evening time, so the joys and sorrows, the work and play, the sins and sanctities of all our ended years are helping to make or mar our present. This globe has been molded into what it now is, not by the physical phenomena of one year or century, but by all the rainfalls and whirlwinds, all the earthquakes and cataclysms, all the volcanic up-lifts and glacier gradings experienced by it through the unnumbered ages during which it has

> God, in wishing us "a happy New Year," does not mean one which, while passing, shall prove an unmixed delight, but one which, when all its prosperities and adversities, its sunshine and its shadows, have been exercising their molding influence upon our characters for hundreds and thousands of years, shall be pronounced, when looked back upon from eternity's discriminating standpoint, to have been one of our very best-one which, seen from afar, shines like a sun in the firmament.

been journeying around the sun.

An Old Soldier's

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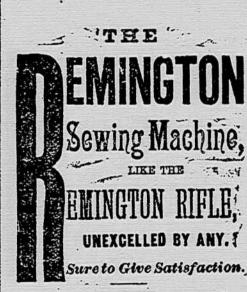
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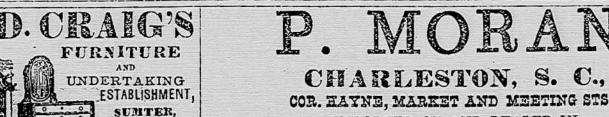
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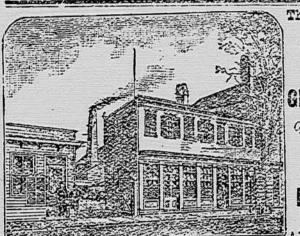
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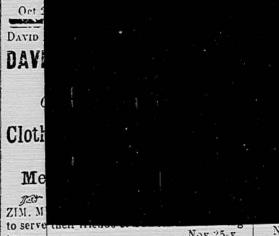
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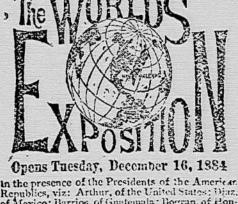
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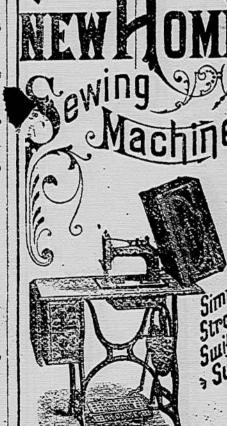
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